(b) if so, whether Government are considering measures to make the Anti-Dowry Laws more effective and also uniform for all religions, caste and race in the entire country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

Chemical warfare exercise by China

1973. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI:
SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item which appeared in the Times of India dated the 14th April, 1989 stating that 'Jane's Defence Weekly' has reported that the Chinese have held a chemical warfare exercise in Tibet in September last and that the Chinese do not preclude the possibility that nuclear or chemical weapons may be used by the Enemy obviously India, if so, what are the facts thereof; and

(b) what is the Government's response and follow up action thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) Government are aware of media reports that an exercise involving chemical warfare units was held in Tibet in 1988.

(b) The Government of India have been contributing positively to ongoing negotiations on a Convention on the Prohibition of development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons, and on their destruction. This fact and Government's position is wellknown to the Chinese Government.

It is Government's policy to keep under constant review all developments having a bearing on India's security.

Desilting and deepeniag of Buckingham canal

1974. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY:
SHRI T.R. BALU:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total length of Buckingham canal;

(b) whether there is any proposal to desilt and deepen the canal;

(c) if so, what will be the cost of the project and by when the project is likely to be completed; and

(d) what would be the estimated traffic after the canal becomes navigable?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) 416 kms.

(b) to (d) The canal flows from Peddaganjam in Andhra Pradesh to Marakkanam backwaters in Tamil Nadu. A scheme to deepen the canal in the territory of Tamil Nadu sent by the State Government and costing Rs. 200·00 lakhs has been sanctioned as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme to improve the stretch of this canal between Ennore lock (near Madras) to Chintamani Lock to a bed width of 10 metres and depth of 1·8 metres below low water level. The work is in progress. The Government of Tamil Nadu has also prepared additional two schemes. Similarly, the Government of Andhra Pradesh had also worked out four separate schemes for sanction as

Centrally sponsored Schemes for improvements of the canals in their territory. In the context of need to develop this canal as a continuous waterway for navigational purposes, the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu have been requested to forward an integrated scheme for developing this canal in mutual consultation. The details of the proposal have not been received so far.

According to the State Governments concerned the anticipated traffic after improvement of the canal is estimated at 4·5 lakh tonnes.

Children drop-outs in Delhi

1975. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what percentage of children, boys and girls in the age group 5 to 14 years remained out of School during 1988-89 in rural and urban areas of Delhi;

(b) what percentage of these children are employed in domestic shops and factory-areas; and what percentage are engaged in begging; and

(c) what steps were taken to ensure that children of this age group do go to school in the light of Article 45 of the Constitution to ensure free and compulsory education for all such children and not forced and made to go in for employment and earning including that by way of begging?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION ADD CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L.P. SHAHI): (a) According to the latest information available, the drop-out rates for children in classes I—VIII for the cohort completing class VIII in 1983-84 was 30·33% in Delhi (27·29% for boys and 33·98% for girls). The break-up between rural and urban areas is not available.

(b) According to 1981 census about 1·76% children in the age group of 5—14 years were engaged in economic activity in Union Territory/District Delhi. The percentage of children engaged in domestic shops, factory areas or engaged in begging is not available.

(c) The National Policy on Education, 1986 envisages free and compulsory education to all children upto 14 years of age by 1995. Education has been made free at elementary stage by all States/UTs in schools run by Government and local bodies. A large programme of non-formal education is in operation for providing part-time education to working children and drop-outs at timings suitable to them. Under the National Child Labour Policy, a number of schemes are being taken up by the Department of Labour in certain areas where there are concentrations of child labour. Under the scheme, special schools have been set up for providing non-formal education, vocational training, health care, supplementary nutrition etc. to such children.

Action against the Principal, Blue Belis School, New Delhi

1976. SHRI DEBA PRASAD RAY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Principal of the Blue Bells School, East of Kailash, New Delhi victimised 15 students' of class XII and forced them to pay Rs. 1000/- each without issuing any receipt;